

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-32 (cancelled)

33. (original) A system for enabling expandable material to be pre-formed into an expandable configuration of a cage for a filter device, for pre-forming the cage, for enabling the filter device to capture embolic material which may be released into a blood vessel during a therapeutic interventional procedure, wherein the expandable configuration of the cage to be pre-formed by the system provides a substantially uniform pre-formed expandable maximum outer diameter portion thereof, for maintaining vessel wall opposition in a patient's vasculature upon deployment of the cage at a location distal to an interventional procedure site, comprising:

a male mandrel element, adapted to enable the expandable material to be extended thereover, including a maximum outer diameter portion extending along the length thereof which is substantially uniform and is substantially equal to the maximum inner diameter portion of the expandable configuration of the cage to be formed thereby; and

a female die element, adapted to enable the expandable material to be formed therein, adapted to extend over the male mandrel member and the expandable material, having a cavity therein, the length of which extends for at least a portion of the length of the male mandrel member, the maximum diameter of which is substantially uniform and is substantially equal to the maximum outer diameter portion of the expandable configuration of the cage to be formed thereby.

34. (original) The system of claim 33, wherein the expandable material for forming the expandable configuration of the cage is adapted to be in the form of a hypotube for extending over the male mandrel element, over which the female die element is adapted to extend.

35. (original) The system of claim 33, wherein the main section of the male mandrel element includes a distal end, the male mandrel element further includes a tapered section, which extends from the distal end of the main section, for enabling the expandable material for forming the expandable configuration of the cage to be extended over the tapered section of the male mandrel element with a gradual transition thereof so as to minimize failure of the material resulting from fatigue or damage during expansion thereof.

36. (original) The system of claim 33, wherein the cavity in the female die element is generally complementary to the male mandrel element, and the female die element is adapted to extend over the male mandrel element and the expandable material for forming the expandable configuration of the cage, so as to lock the male mandrel element and the material therein.

37. (original) The system of claim 33, wherein the hypotube of expandable material includes a plurality of ends, and the system further comprises a plurality of springs adapted to be connected to an end of the hypotube of expandable material to enable a portion of the cage, to be formed from the hypotube of expandable material by

the system, to be in tension, so as to aid in the tracking and deploying of the cage in tortuous vasculature.

38. (original) The system of claim 36, wherein the male mandrel element includes a generally pin-shaped channel therein which extends therethrough, for enabling a pin to extend therethrough for alignment thereof.

39. (original) A method of enabling the capture of embolic material which may be released into a blood vessel during a therapeutic interventional procedure, in a system which comprises a guide wire, including a distal end, adapted to be positioned within the blood vessel and to extend to a position distal to an interventional procedure site, and a filter device, adapted to be positioned and deployed at a location in the patient's vasculature distal to the interventional procedure site, and to capture embolic material which may be released into the blood in the blood vessel during the interventional procedure, including an engaging element, for enabling the filter device to be snap-fitted so as to engage the distal end of the guide wire, wherein the method comprises:

 snap-fitting the filter device so as to engage the distal end of the guide wire;

 inserting the filter device and the guide wire to the location in the patient's vasculature distal to the interventional procedure site; and

 expanding the filter device for deployment thereof.

40. (original) A method of enabling expandable material to be pre-formed into an expandable configuration of a cage for a filter device, for pre-forming the cage, for enabling the filter device to capture embolic material which may be released into a blood vessel during a therapeutic interventional procedure, wherein the expandable configuration of the cage to be pre-formed by the system provides a substantially uniform pre-formed expandable maximum outer diameter thereof, for maintaining vessel wall opposition in a patient's vasculature upon deployment of the cage at a location distal to an interventional procedure site, in a system which comprises a male mandrel element, adapted to enable the expandable material to be extended thereover, including a maximum outer diameter portion extending along the length thereof which is substantially uniform and is substantially equal to the maximum inner diameter of the expandable configuration of the cage to be formed thereby, and a female die element, adapted to enable the expandable material to be formed therein, adapted to extend over the male mandrel member and the expandable material, having a cavity therein, the length of which extends for at least a portion of the length of the male mandrel member, the maximum diameter of which is substantially uniform and is substantially equal to the maximum outer diameter portion of the expandable configuration of the cage to be formed thereby, wherein the method comprises:

extending the expandable material over the maximum outer diameter portion of the male mandrel element, so as to form the maximum inner diameter of the expandable configuration of the cage to be formed thereby; and

extending the cavity in the female die element over the male mandrel element and the expandable material, so as to form the maximum outer diameter portion of the expandable configuration of the cage to be formed thereby.